

## **Wilderness Survival Merit Badge at Riverbend Park**

Welcome to the Wilderness Survival Merit Badge program at Riverbend Park. The program is held at the Riverbend Visitor Center located at 8700 Potomac Hills Street in Great Falls.

### **Below is the recommended homework to be completed before the program:**

There are some useful links at the end of some questions; however, scouts are encouraged to find their own sources also (library, internet etc.). Please note that internet links change often and the recommended links may not work.

We recommend that you download the merit badge worksheets from [meritbadge.com](http://meritbadge.com) and bring these worksheets to class. These worksheets help scouts organize their homework and classwork.

1. Show that you know first aid for, and how to prevent injuries or illnesses that could occur in backcountry settings, including hypothermia, heat reactions, frostbite, dehydration, blisters, insect stings, tick bites, and snakebites. A useful link: <http://www.princeton.edu/~oa/resources/index.shtml>
2. From memory, list the seven priorities for survival in a backcountry or wilderness location. These are: positive mental attitude, first aid, shelter, fire, signaling, water, food. A useful link: [http://www.backcountryattitude.com/survival\\_priorities.html](http://www.backcountryattitude.com/survival_priorities.html)
3. Discuss ways to avoid panic and maintain a high level of morale when lost, and explain why this is important.
4. Describe the steps you would take to survive in the following conditions: cold and snowy, wet (forest), hot and dry (desert), windy (mountains or plains) and water (ocean, lake, or river).
9. Explain how to protect yourself from insects, reptiles and bears.
11. Show that you know the proper clothing to wear in your area on an overnight in extremely hot weather and in extremely cold weather. A useful link: <http://www.princeton.edu/~oa/equipment/index.shtml>
12. Explain why it is usually not wise to eat edible wild plants or wildlife in a wilderness survival situation.

### **What to bring to the program:**

- Bring your completed homework. It is OK if you cannot complete the homework before class. You can bring completed homework in at a later date for sign-off.

- Come prepared to discuss and present your homework. As we move from one topic to the next during class scouts will be asked to present homework elements completed. It will be more important to prove that you have understood a requirement orally rather than just presenting written information.
- Bring your blue card. (Riverbend does not have blue cards.)
- Bring/wear weather appropriate clothing/outerwear. We will not go outdoors in heavy rain or thunderstorms. Boy Scout uniform not required.
- Bring a pencil and pen.
- Bring a flashlight, if the program is held after dusk.
- We recommend that you download the merit badge worksheets from [meritbadge.com](http://meritbadge.com) and bring these worksheets to class. These worksheets help scouts organize their homework and classwork.
- Bring a snack and drink or money to purchase some at the visitor center. Bring more substantial food if your program is longer than four hours.

### **Homework to be completed after the program:**

During the program, the merit badge counselor will do a demonstration or explain the process for completing the final merit badge requirements. Your scout must provide evidence of completion in order to obtain blue card sign-off. Digital photographs of your scout doing the element and a picture of the completed requirement will be sufficient evidence, unless otherwise stated below.

If your scout has a strong understanding of the requirement, he is welcome to complete this requirement at any time. Remember to document work and completion via digital pictures.

5. Put together a personal survival kit and explain how each item in it could be useful. Bring completed survival kit to show your merit badge counselor for sign-off.

8. Spend a night in a natural shelter that you made. (In class we will complete the first part of requirement 8: Improvise a natural shelter. For the purpose of this demonstration use techniques that have little negative impact on the environment.)

Once the homework, class work and post homework are completed, all elements of the merit badge will be complete.

If your scout needs blue card sign-off after the class date, please call 703-759-9018 to arrange a time to meet with a merit badge counselor.

We're looking forward to working with your scout.

Chris Kopsick, Ethan Kuhnhenh, Dan Pizzo  
Merit Badge Counselors

Karen Sheffield  
Senior Interpreter, Riverbend Park

Fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/riverbend  
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